

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 24, 2007

The Honorable Oscar Berger Perdomo  
Presidente de la República de Guatemala  
Casa Presidencial  
6 Avenida, 4-18 Zona 1  
Ciudad de Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Dear President Berger:

As Members of the United States Congress, we are committed to eliminating the barriers that hinder all children from their basic right to a permanent loving family.

We are aware of Guatemala's recent decision to require all adoption cases to meet Hague standards as of January 1, 2008, and to stop all processing of adoption cases with non-Hague countries, including the United States, until such a system can be implemented. While we support your efforts to reform the intercountry adoption process in Guatemala and applaud your commitment to the Hague Convention, we are concerned that this action may cause unnecessary harm to Guatemala's orphaned children.

At present, 370,000 Guatemalan children do not have a permanent and loving family. The suspension of all intercountry adoptions, combined with the lack of a Hague process within Guatemala, will force over 3,000 children legally relinquished by their birthparents and properly referred to potential adoptive parents, to remain outside of permanent family care indefinitely. As we have learned from our own experience, the implementation of a high-quality, efficient Hague process can take years. To leave children without the benefit of a permanent home for this length of time can have long-term physical and emotional consequences. It is not in the best interest of these children. Furthermore, because the current system of care is not publicly financed, many of these children may be left without the food, care, and shelter they need to survive.

We commend Guatemala's efforts to implement a Hague compliant system. We share your goal to see that all Guatemalan children and their birth parents are protected from exploitation. We believe, however, that this goal could be better achieved by providing an interim measure for pending adoption applications. We encourage you to consider allowing the current law to be applied to adoption applications for children whose parental rights have been legally relinquished or terminated and filed before January 1, 2008. This approach would not only allow for sufficient time to implement a long-term solution, but such an interim plan would also ensure that orphaned children do not remain outside the care of a family for many years.

Again, we support your efforts to protect the best interests of children in Guatemala by working to implement the Hague Treaty. We believe that this treaty will ultimately serve as the foundation for a system of international adoption that is both transparent and efficient. In moving toward this goal, we must never lose sight of the treaty's overall purpose, as stated in the opening line of the Hague Convention: *Recognizing that the*

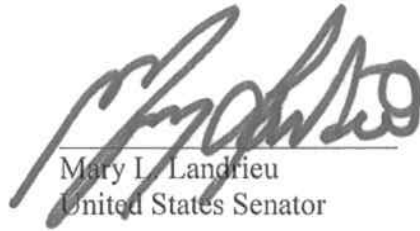
child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding. We respectfully request that Guatemala's new international adoption program is founded on the principle that children belong in families.

Thank you for your concern and work to protect the best interests of the children in Guatemala.

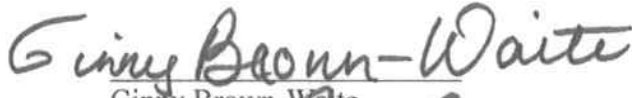
Sincerely,



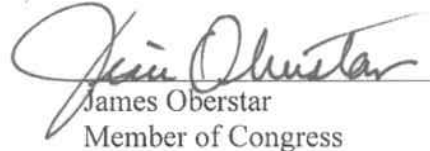
Norm Coleman  
United States Senator



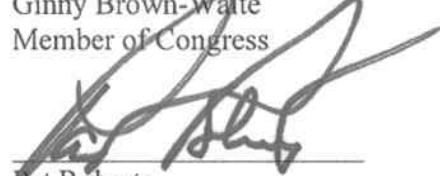
Mary L. Landrieu  
United States Senator



Ginny Brown-Waite  
Member of Congress



James Oberstar  
Member of Congress



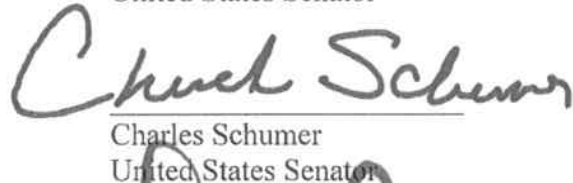
Pat Roberts  
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator



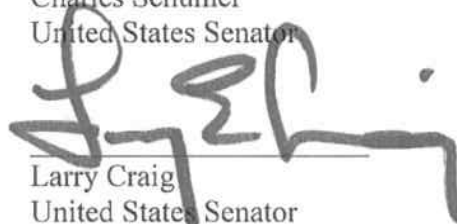
Richard Durbin  
United States Senator



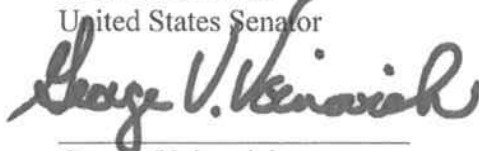
Charles Schumer  
United States Senator



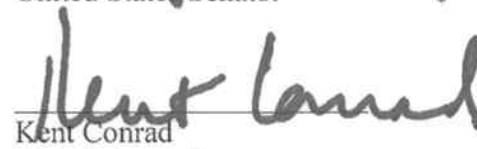
Barbara Mikulski  
United States Senator



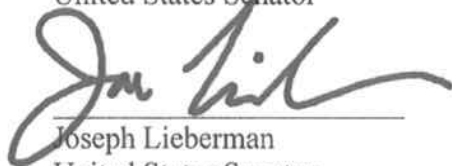
Larry Craig  
United States Senator



George Voinovich  
United States Senator



Kent Conrad  
United States Senator



Joseph Lieberman  
United States Senator



Lisa Murkowski  
United States Senator

Arlen Specter PRESIDENT BERGER  
GUATEMALA  
United States Senator

Jack Reed  
United States Senator

Bob Corker  
United States Senator

Ron Wyden  
United States Senator

Susan Collins  
United States Senator

Robert Bennett  
United States Senator

Maria Cantwell  
United States Senator

Johnny Isakson  
United States Senator

Patty Murray  
United States Senator

Richard Burr  
United States Senator

John McCain  
United States Senator

Lindsey Graham  
United States Senator

John Kerry  
United States Senator

Gordon Smith  
United States Senator

Saxby Chambliss  
United States Senator

James Inhofe  
United States Senator

Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator


Carl Levin  
United States Senator

  
Charles Grassley  
United States Senator

  
Tim Johnson  
United States Senator

  
Sam Brownback  
United States Senator

  
Robert Byrd  
United States Senator


  
Jim Bunning  
United States Senator

  
Frank Lautenberg  
United States Senator

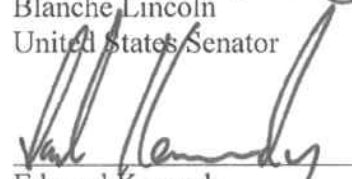
  
Sheldon Whitehouse  
United States Senator

  
John Rockefeller  
United States Senator

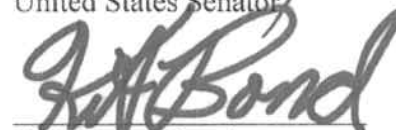
  
Barack Obama  
United States Senator

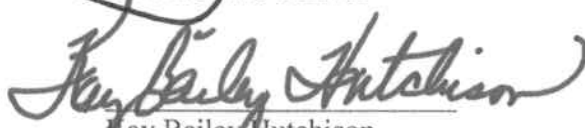
  
Blanche Lincoln  
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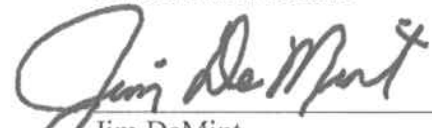
  
Wayne Allard  
United States Senator

  
Edward Kennedy  
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John Warner  
United States Senator

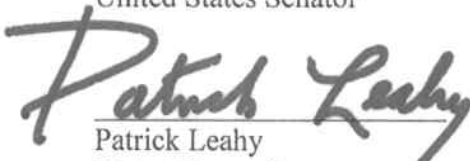
  
Christopher Bond  
United States Senator


  
Kay Bailey Hutchison  
United States Senator

  
Jim DeMint  
United States Senator

  
Mel Martinez  
United States Senator

  
Robert Casey  
United States Senator

  
Patrick Leahy  
United States Senator

  
John Thune  
United States Senator

Todd Akin  
Todd Akin  
Member of Congress

Dave Camp  
Dave Camp  
Member of Congress

Patrick McHenry  
Patrick McHenry  
Member of Congress

Stephanie Hereth Sandlin  
Stephanie Hereth Sandlin  
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David Scott  
David Scott  
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Steve Israel  
Steve Israel  
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David Davis  
David Davis  
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Todd Platts  
Todd Platts  
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Jim McDermott  
Jim McDermott  
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Barbara Cubin  
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Phil Gingrey  
Phil Gingrey  
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Stephen Lynch  
Stephen Lynch  
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John Yarmuth  
John Yarmuth  
Member of Congress

Mike Doyle  
Mike Doyle  
Member of Congress

Virginia Foxx  
Virginia Foxx  
Member of Congress

James McGovern  
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Member of Congress

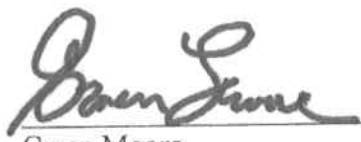
Jim Jordan  
Jim Jordan  
Member of Congress

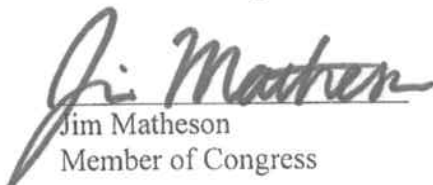
Judy Biggert  
Judy Biggert  
Member of Congress

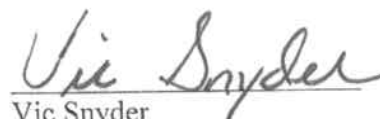
John Oliver  
John Oliver  
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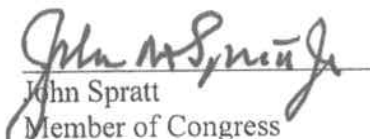
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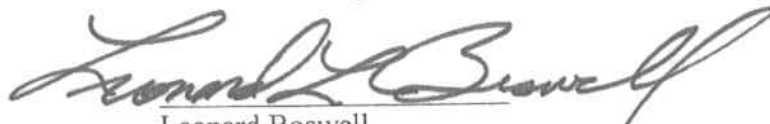
  
Joe Donnelly  
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Gwen Moore  
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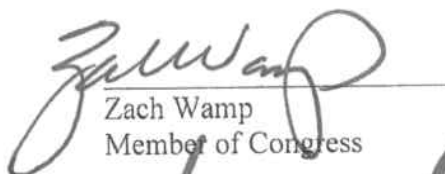
  
Jim Matheson  
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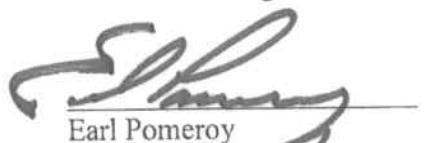
  
Vic Snyder  
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John Spratt  
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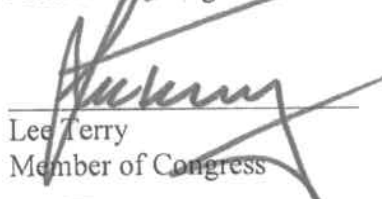
  
Leonard Boswell  
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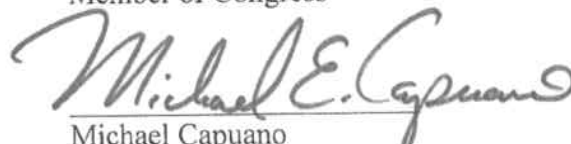
  
John Kline  
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Zach Wamp  
Member of Congress

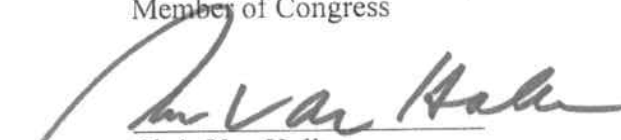
  
Earl Pomeroy  
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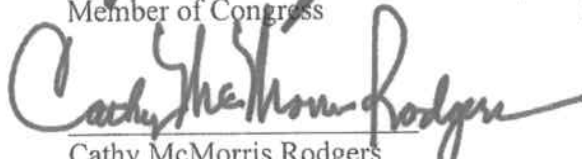
  
Virgil Goode  
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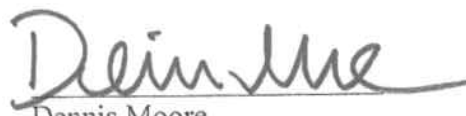
  
Lee Terry  
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Michael Capuano  
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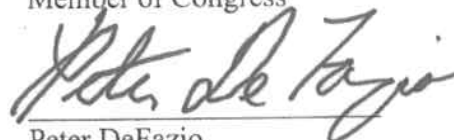
  
Jim Cooper  
Member of Congress


  
Chris Van Hollen  
Member of Congress

  
Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
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Dennis Moore  
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Dutch Ruppersberger  
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Peter DeFazio  
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Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress

  
Danny Davis  
Member of Congress



David Price  
Member of Congress



Jerry Moran  
Member of Congress



Jim Saxton  
Member of Congress



Peter Hoekstra  
Member of Congress



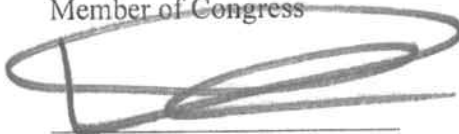
Barney Frank  
Member of Congress



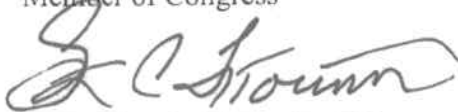
Steven Rothman  
Member of Congress



Bart Gordon  
Member of Congress



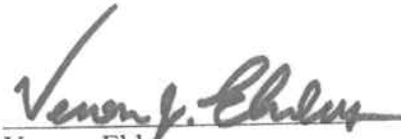
David Wu  
Member of Congress



Steven LaTourette  
Member of Congress



Chris Smith  
Member of Congress



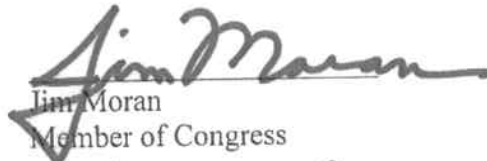
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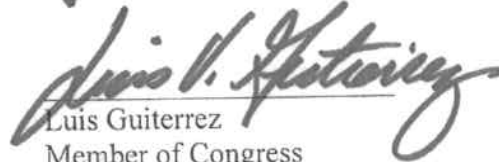
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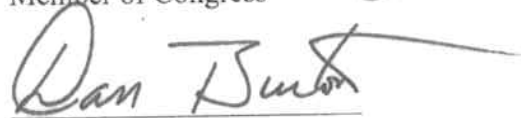
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Member of Congress



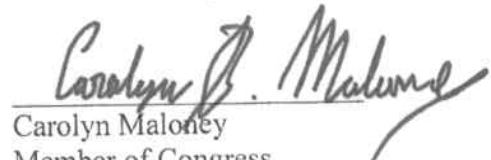
Jim Moran  
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Luis Guterrez  
Member of Congress



Dan Burton  
Member of Congress



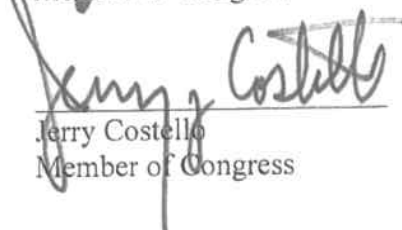
Carolyn Maloney  
Member of Congress



Tom Davis  
Member of Congress



James Walsh  
Member of Congress



Jerry Costello  
Member of Congress

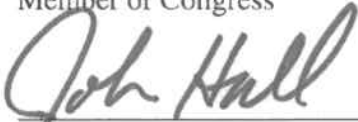




Phil Hare  
Member of Congress



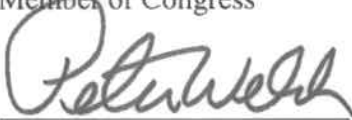
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John Hall  
Member of Congress



Scott Garrett  
Member of Congress



Peter Welch  
Member of Congress



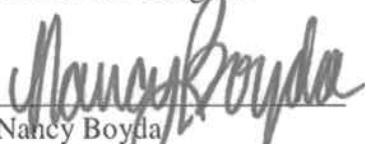
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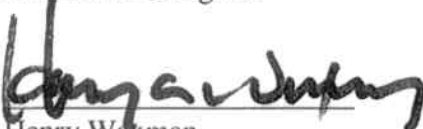
Marilyn Musgrave  
Member of Congress



Tim Walz  
Member of Congress



Nancy Boyda  
Member of Congress



Henry Waxman  
Member of Congress



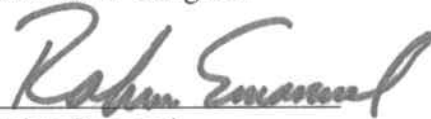
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Member of Congress



Timothy Johnson  
Member of Congress



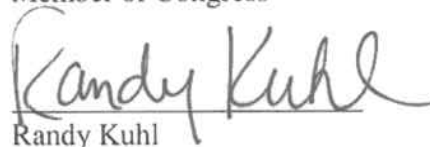
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Member of Congress



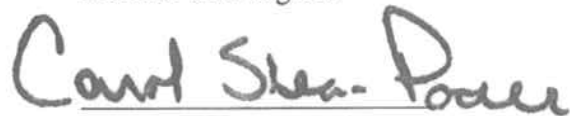
Rahm Emanuel  
Member of Congress



Jason Altmire  
Member of Congress



Randy Kuhl  
Member of Congress



Carol Shea-Porter  
Member of Congress



Thaddeus McCotter  
Member of Congress

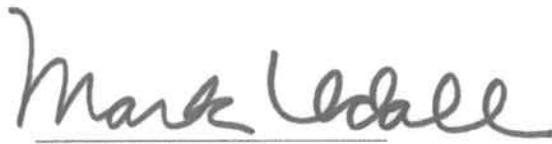


Don Young  
Member of Congress



Rodney Frelinghuysen  
Member of Congress





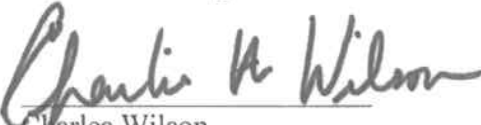
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Member of Congress



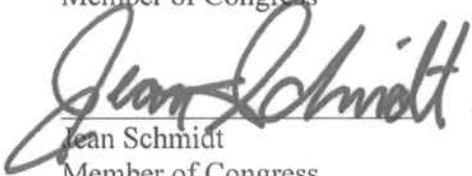
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Member of Congress



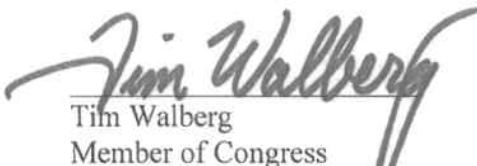
Darrell Issa  
Member of Congress



Charles Wilson  
Member of Congress



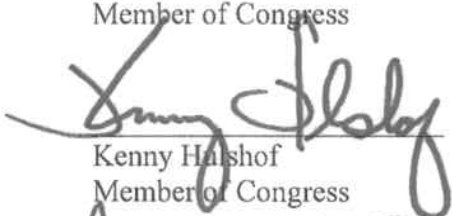
Jean Schmidt  
Member of Congress



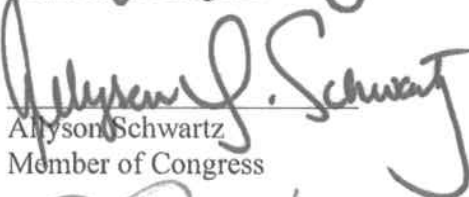
Tim Walberg  
Member of Congress



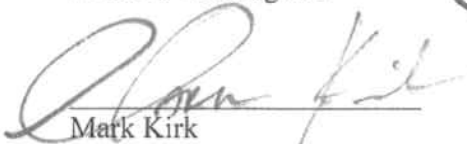
Richard Baker  
Member of Congress



Kenny Hulse  
Member of Congress



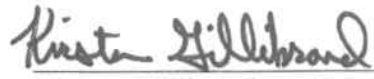
Alyson Schwartz  
Member of Congress



Mark Kirk  
Member of Congress



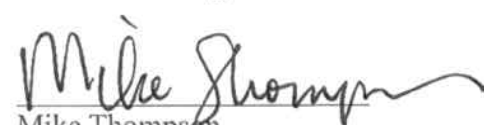
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Member of Congress



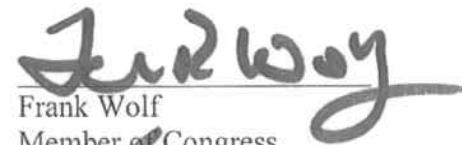
Kirsten Gillibrand  
Member of Congress



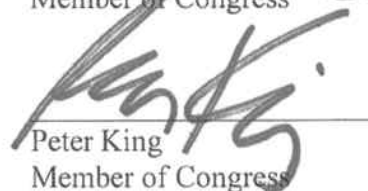
Tim Bishop  
Member of Congress



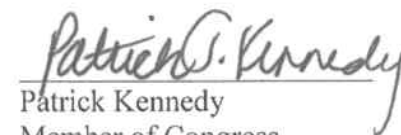
Mike Thompson  
Member of Congress



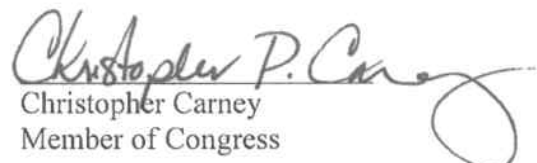
Frank Wolf  
Member of Congress



Peter King  
Member of Congress



Patrick Kennedy  
Member of Congress



Christopher Carney  
Member of Congress



Heath Shuler  
Member of Congress



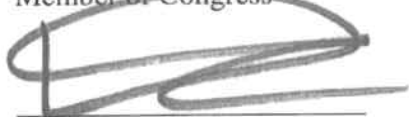
Geoff Davis  
Member of Congress




Steven Rothman  
Member of Congress



Bart Gordon  
Member of Congress



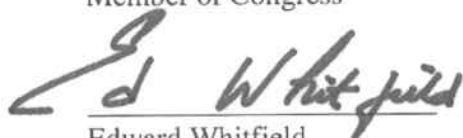
David Wu  
Member of Congress



Steven LaTourette  
Member of Congress



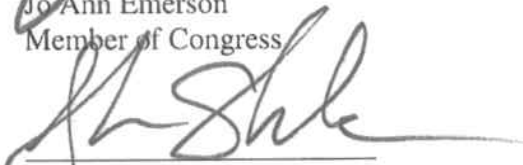
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Member of Congress



Edward Whitfield  
Member of Congress



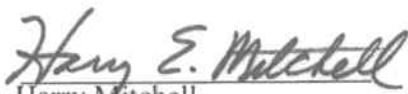
Jo Ann Emerson  
Member of Congress



John Shimkus  
Member of Congress



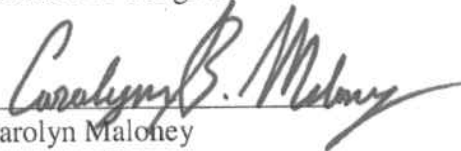
Albert Wynn  
Member of Congress



Harry Mitchell  
Member of Congress



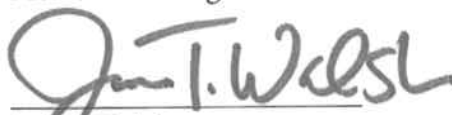
Dan Burton  
Member of Congress



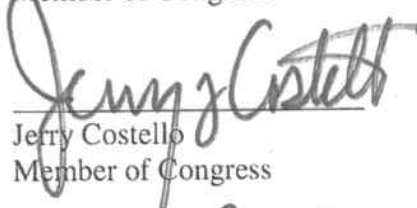
Carolyn Maloney  
Member of Congress



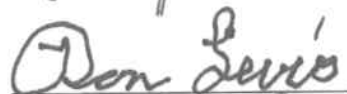
Tom Davis  
Member of Congress



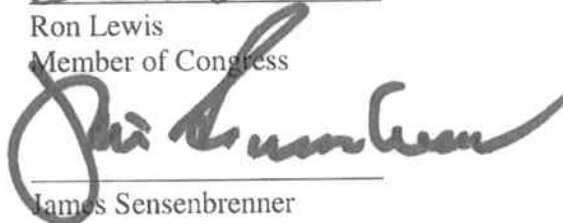
James Walsh  
Member of Congress



Jerry Costello  
Member of Congress



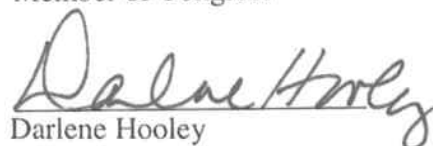
Ron Lewis  
Member of Congress



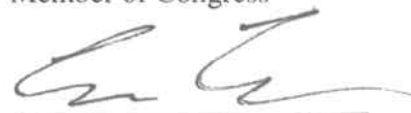
James Sensenbrenner  
Member of Congress



Bill Pascrell  
Member of Congress



Darlene Hooley  
Member of Congress



Chris Cannon  
Member of Congress



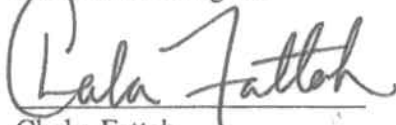
Julia Carson  
Member of Congress



Louise McIntosh Slaughter  
Member of Congress



Bob Goodlatte  
Member of Congress



Chaka Fattah  
Member of Congress



Carolyn McCarthy  
Member of Congress



Bart Stupak  
Member of Congress



Tim Holden  
Member of Congress



Adrian Smith  
Member of Congress



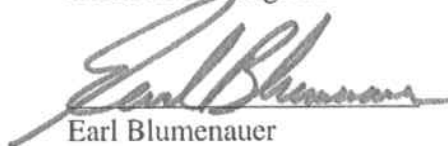
Ben Chandler  
Member of Congress



Ed Pastor  
Member of Congress



Mark Souder  
Member of Congress



Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress



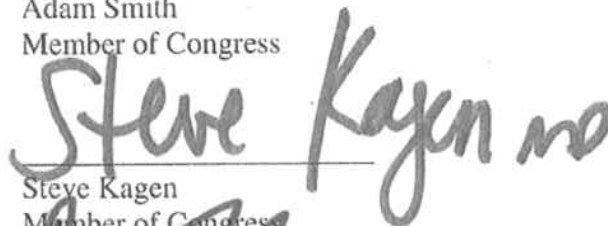
Alan Mollohan  
Member of Congress



Phillip English  
Member of Congress



Adam Smith  
Member of Congress



Steve Kagen  
Member of Congress




Chris Murphy  
Member of Congress



Zoe Lofgren  
Member of Congress



Collin Peterson  
Member of Congress



Michael Arcuri  
Member of Congress



Charles Dent  
Member of Congress



Zack Space  
Member of Congress



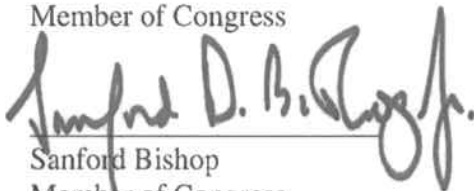
Henry Cuellar  
Member of Congress



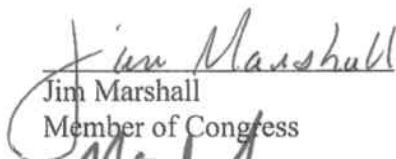
Dave Reichert  
Member of Congress



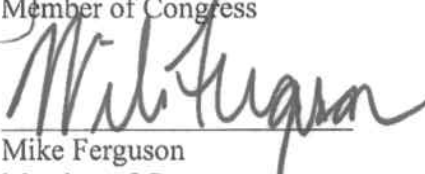
Brad Miller  
Member of Congress



Sanford Bishop  
Member of Congress



Jim Marshall  
Member of Congress



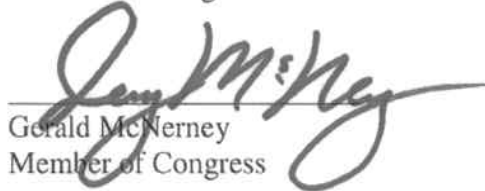
Mike Ferguson  
Member of Congress



Tom Price  
Member of Congress



Stephen Cohen  
Member of Congress



Gerald McEnerney  
Member of Congress



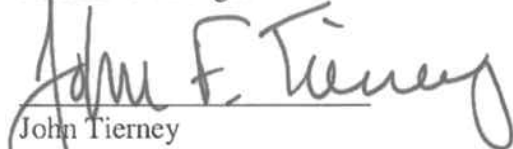
Timothy Murphy  
Member of Congress



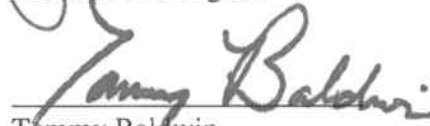
William Sali  
Member of Congress



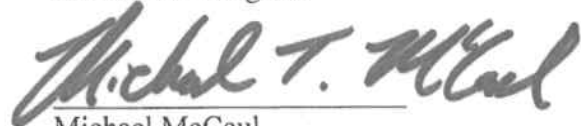
Ron Kind  
Member of Congress



John Tierney  
Member of Congress



Tammy Baldwin  
Member of Congress



Michael McCaul  
Member of Congress

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Hillary Rodham Clinton  
United States Senator

Chris Dodd

Christopher Dodd  
United States Senator

John Sununu

John Sununu  
United States Senator

Elizabeth Dole

Elizabeth Dole  
United States Senator